In Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 ART Khasi ART

INTRODUCTION.

In 1903 Sir Bampfylde Fuller, then Chief Commissioner of Assam, proposed, and the Government of India sanctioned, the preparation of a series of monographs on the more important tribes and castes of the Province, of which this volume is the first. They were to be undertaken by writers who had had special and intimate experience of the races to be described, the accounts of earlier observers being at the same time studied and incorporated; a uniform scheme of treatment was laid down which was to be adhered to in each monograph, and certain limits of size were prescribed.

Major Gurdon, the author of the following pages, who is also, as Superintendent of Ethnography in Assam, editor of the whole series, has enjoyed a long and close acquaintance with the Khasi race, whose institutions he has here undertaken to describe. Thoroughly familiar with their language, he has for three years been in charge as Deputy-Commissioner of the district where they dwell, continually moving among them, and visiting every part of the beautiful region which is called by their name. The administration of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills is an exceptionally interesting field of official responsibility. About half of the district, including the country around the capital, Shillong, is outside the limits of British India, consisting of a collection of small states in political relations, regulated by treaty with the Government of India, which enjoy

9. Godwin-Austen G-5 (no date) 1872 A87 Khasi A87

On the Stone Monuments *of the* Khasi Hill Tribes, *and on some of the Peculiar Rites and Customs of the People.* By Major H. H. Godwin-Austen, F.R.G.S., Deputy Superintendent Topographical Survey of India.

The increasing interest that is taken at the present day in ethnology and the history of man in past and present ages, more particularly in the customs of semi-civilized races in distant quarters of the world as compared with the state of those races who dwelt in Europe in early historic times, has led me to put together the information I obtained regarding the people of the Khási Hill tracts. Their customs are peculiar, and the fact that they are among the very few who erect at the present day monolithic monuments, is alone of great interest.

This has not escaped the attention of different travellers, officers of the Indian service and others who have visited that quarter of the Bengal Presidency, and from time to time papers have been published; these are scattered through a number of periodicals, and in no case is a complete record of these Hill people to be found.

Notices on the Garos and Khásis, as well as many of the other tribes on the north-eastern frontier of Bengal, are generally very short, in some instances minimal, and in some cases do the people, savages though they be, but little justice; in truth, there is very much to admire in these Hill people, they are in many ways, socially and physically, far above their Bengáli neighbours of the plains; intercourse with them is, in consequence, much pleasanter, easier, and has far greater interest; innate honesty and truth in their manners of dealing often crop out, more especially in villages well within the hills, where contact with the people of the plains is of rare occurrence.

I shall notice the best of these papers having reference to tribes inhabiting the range of hills running west to east, south of Assam, from the sharp southern bend of the Brahmaputra up to the Kopili and Dhyung river, in long. 92 deg. 45 min., a length of some one hundred and sixty-five miles.

In the "Asiatic Researches," vol. iii, published so far back as 1792, is a very interesting paper on the Gáros, by Mr. John Eliot; his travels, however, did not extend so far to the east as the Khásias.

The Rev. A. B. Lish, a missionary of Cherra Poonjee, published an account of the Khásias in the "Calcutta Christian Observer" for 1838, he gives an account of their mode of breaking eggs for omens, etc.

Neither in M'Cosh's "Topography of Assam," or in Robinson's "Assam," is any newer or better information afforded concerning

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nearly seventy years of age, spoke English a little, and kindly agreed to help by acting as introducer as well as interpreter. The Chowkidar of the bungalow, a Christian Khasi who spoke Hindi tolerably well was however our principal interpreter. Before proceeding to the village, I had studied Roberts' Khasi Grammar and also learnt simple sentences in Khasi necessary for collecting genealogies, kinship terms and connected details, like the inheritance of the ancestral house and lands. This portion of the data was collected entirely through questions and answers in Khasi; the other details were obtained with the help of myntri U Subu Rai and his friends and the Chowkidar, U Hudrington. On important points however, some checking was made, by simple questions in Khasi, which involved definite answers in the affirmative or negative. My students who had accompanied me for training in field studies, repeated some of my observations, in my presence and with my help and guidance.

My best thanks are due to Mr. K. Cantlie, Deputy Commissioner, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, for furnishing me with the letter of introduction to U Subu Rai and for other facilities. His published notes on Khasi law, especially the chapters on inheritance also proved to be of great value in carrying out the enquiries (5). In the subsequent portions of this article, references to the works of Gurdon and Cantlie, will be indicated merely by (G) and (CN) respectively.

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 ABS Khasi ABS • Garo ABS

From the beginning of my field work, my interest lay in a comparative study of the two systems, not in preparing a complete monograph of the cultures of the two peoples. I used the period of my field research in working among the two peoples alternately, so that I could constantly check from one field to the other as new problems appeared.

The period of my field work was very limited (October, 1955-February, 1956). I did not know the vernacular of either the Garo or the Khasi (since Garo language has much commonness with Tibetan language which I was used to read and speak, I could quickly get used to follow their speech during my field work, but I failed to do so in Khasi language). I employed altogether five local English-speaking interpreters (out of the five, three were pagan, and all had relatives in the villages where I worked). But I already had experience in studying the economic and social organization of other hill peoples in Assam, having carried out two years (1953-1955) field work among tribes in Tripura State and among the Tangkul Nagas in Manipur State, as also among Himalayan peoples. This all helped me a great deal in my work among the Garo and the Khasi, and is one of the reasons why I could collect such a considerable amount of *data*, in spite of the above mentioned handicaps of my actual field work. (Later on, I carried out field research for four months among the Nayar of Kerala, to provide further *data* for comparative study.

The Garo and the Khasi present very different structures from each other. In order to present a more effective picture of each structure, I have used different ways of presentation, each of which brings out certain important theoretical implications. The emphasis is laid accordingly upon different features: in the case of the Garo, it is the marriage system in relation to the village community; in the case of the Khasi, it is variation in marriage forms related to the structure of descent groups.

I wish to express my profound gratitude, first of all, to the Elin Wagner Foundation in Stockholm, by whose generous grant the field work of this study was carried out, and next to Professor C. Lévi-Strauss, who has consistently encouraged me to complete this manuscript and has very kindly given me this opportunity for publication. I am greatly indebted also to: Professor Fred Eggan, Professor Raymond Firth, Professor Meyer Fortes, Professor C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, Dr. E. R. Leach, Dr. Audrey Richards, and Professor D. M. Schneider for much stimulating discussion and helpful comment on the theoretical problems of this study.

I am grateful for invitations from the Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago (1959-1960) and the Department of Cultural Anthropology, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (1960-1961), as also for an association with the Department

15- Nakane E-6 (1950-1954) 1967 ARS Khasi ARS ✱
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of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science, which allowed me to give series of lectures on this subject. I received great profit from discussions with staff and students of these institutions in the preparation of the final manuscript. I have a special debt to acknowledge also to Professor Isi Tax, who has afforded me consistent help and encouragement in this work. I also had some interesting discussions with Miss A. Filotis McCormack and Dr. R. Burling each of whom worked in other areas of the Khasi and Garo Hills. I also wish to express my thanks to Mrs. Fiona Hammond of the School of Oriental and African Studies, and Mrs. Horn of London School of Economics for their kind help with the manuscript.

A major acknowledgement also goes to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research who supported this study, and to the Centre for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Sciences for its hospitality in the summer of 1959 when the first part of this manuscript was prepared.

Finally my most grateful thanks go to the Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, which in its generous appreciation of the needs of a social anthropologist has permitted me to have a sufficient period of research abroad to make this and other studies possible.

London, February 1962.

Chie Nakane.

[P. 16 is blank]

[P. 105 B]

NORTHERN UPLAND GROUPS

EMASIS*

Synonyms: Cavos, Cowpah, Kowa, Kowie, Kowpa, Kowpe, Khoie, Khowah, Khowi, Khowie, Khwe

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ORIENTATION. Identification and location. The name Khoi has often been applied to their entire

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* The account of Khoi culture contributed by Anna F. Gomez, a friend and field worker among Khoi in the United Khoi States, with Dakota. The author wishes to emphasize that her data are on the upland Khoi who inhabit the center of the Dakota. She gratefully acknowledges support of the field work from the Department of Anthropology of the University of Chicago, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc., and the Ford Foundation, for one of its Foreign Area Training Fellowships.

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Khasi Kinship Terms in four Dialects

by [illegible]

Contents

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II. The List of the Kinship Terms
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I. Introductory Remarks

In 1961 [illegible] published in 1961 an analysis of Khasi kinship terms[1] based on eight genealogies which he collected in the Nongstoin area, about eighty miles south-west of Shillong.[2] He discussed in this paper a previous publication by Professor Kroeber,[3] where special features of certain Khasi kinship terms are held to prove the pre-existence of a dual system in a one-time Khasi social order and he quotes also the late Sir Dunsmore H. C. Roy's work on Khasi kinship,[4] and lists of Garo/Khasi relationship terms, contained in "Census of India, Reports"[5] and Khasi terms in U. N. Lyon Sutnga's "Khasi-English Dictionary"[6]. P. R. T. Gurdon's monograph on the Khasi[7] and in Sir Gurdon Carmichael's "Notes on Khasi Law"[8]. Discussing these previously published papers, Chattopadhyaya arrives at the conclusion that Kroeber's hypothesis of a dual organization in a hypothetical former Khasi society was not justified.[9]

The present paper, however, does not enter into discussion of this

[1] Chattopadhyaya (1961).
[2] Ibid., p. 1.
[3] Kroeber (1923).
[4] Roy (1935).
[5] McSwiney (1931), pp. 74,75. The Census Report of 1891, quoted by Gauntlett (1902), p. 1, is not available to me at the time of writing.
[6] Sutnga Sutna (1966).
[7] Gurdon (1914).
[8] Carmichael (1939).
[9] Chattopadhyaya (1961), pp. 97, 98.

provided and without his most valuable knowledge of Khasi customs and beliefs, and lectures for very kindly sent a private copy of this work, which had not been available to me previously.

The present paper offers data on the following subjects:

1. Khasi kinship terms from the Synteng Khasi plateau-area in the Shillong town, about 30 to 40 miles south-east of Shillong, which are in some minor details different from the Shanphlang data, collected by Cheriton-Kamthan, south-west of Shillong;
2. Comparative data from the War-Khasi;
3. from the plateau-area of Jowai in the Jaintia[1] Hills, and
4. from the War-Jaintia;
5. Aspects of the Khasi kinship terms, with special reference to the matrilineal order of society, and to the respective position of women and men there, especially the particular consideration which the biological relationship through the father receives in kinship terminology, in spite of the emphasis on the matrilineal structure in Khasi society (comp. note No. 1 of the list and its discussion in para. 1.6 of the present paper, on p. 388).

The data were collected in 640 recorded to which I was enabled by two Research Grants for comparative studies in matrilineal civilizations of India, given by the Viking Fund Inc. (now: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research) in New York, during the periods 1950-51 and 1953-55. My gratefulness to the foundation for enabling me to carry out these field researches, as well as to the University of Madras, for granting me Sabbatical leave for the same purpose, is here once more recorded.

My research programme was based on the first tentative working hypothesis, laid down in my book "Matriliny-right in India"[2], but includes also various other aspects of study which have not been pre-planned, or even considered there[3], as for instance also the present comparative study of kinship terms in areas of four Khasi dialects and their special significance to the Khasi matrilineal social system. The material was collected during a five months house-to-house study in the recently founded Plateau Khasi village Mawlyn Jyn, during April and May 1954. This village consisted mostly of houses, owned by Khasi elder sisters and inhabited by them, with their families, after they had left the ancestral home in the main village Kharsing, about one mile across the valley on the western side of the new settlement. The ancestral family houses there were in the possession of either the mother, or, if she was no more alive, the youngest daughter of the family, the *ka khun khadduh*[4].

[1] Jaintia, (Pnar or "Synteng") are the Khasi speaking mountain neighbours of the Khasi proper. As among the Khasi, so also among Jaintia the people in the east plateau highlands are in many ways different from those who settled in the lowland regional landscape of the southern slopes, now situated just north of the East Pakistan frontier: — the so-called War-country, where economy is mainly based on jam-leaf gardening.

[2] Gurdon (1914), pp. 62, seq., Cowell (1926), p. 10.

[3] Eberhard (1951).

[4] Eberhard (1952/A), (1952/B), (1953/C), (1954/D), (1954/E), (1955/F), (1955/G).